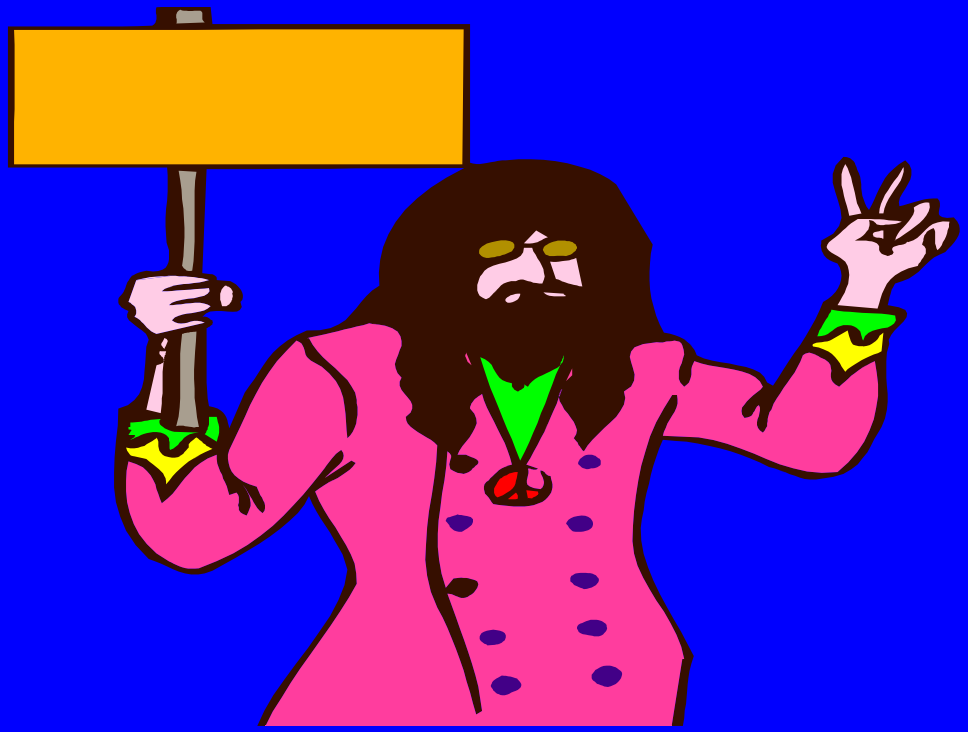
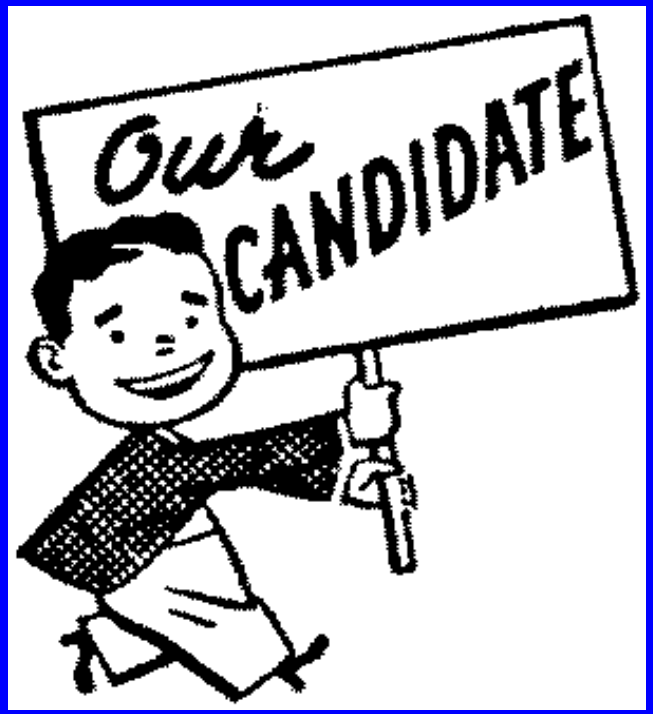
POLITICAL ACTIVITIES



Major Kerry L. Muehlenbeck

Nuts-and-Bolts of Political Activities



- DoD Policy & Additional Authority
- Points to Ponder
- Do’s and Don’ts
- Added areas of concern

DoD Policy & Additional Authority

- DoD Policy
  - Honor the constitutional notion of a politically neutral military establishment
  - Encourage members to carry out obligations of citizenship to maximum extent possible, consistent with certain military restrictions.

- Authority
  - Joint Ethics Regulation
  - AFI 51-902 (general ANG guidelines in Chapter 8)

Points to Ponder

- AD personnel have greater restrictions than Traditional ANG members
- Guidance regarding AGRs more closely resembles AD restrictions
- Federal technicians have greater restrictions than traditional ANG members
- There are more restrictions on officers than on enlisted personnel

ANG Political Activities: Do's and Don'ts

- A Sampling of Permissible Activity
  - Vote, encourage others to vote
  - Express personal opinion as individual citizen
  - Contribute to a campaign
  - Attend political gathering, not in uniform
  - Display bumper sticker on POV; wear political button on civilian clothes
  - Campaign for and hold elective partisan and non-partisan civil offices if does not interfere with military duties and not on extended active duty (>270 days)

ANG Political Activities: Do's and Don'ts

- Impermissible Activities
  - Hold partisan activity at base facilities
  - Express opinion in military capacity or imply official government endorsement
  - Solicit votes or campaign donations on base
  - Give money to a person in government service in order to promote a political purpose
  - Attend partisan functions in uniform
  - While campaigning for office: use ANG position as political selling point, campaign in uniform, or use government equipment/facilities

Additional Areas of Concern

- Partisan Campaigning on Base
  - No “right” to campaign on base
  - Detailed guidance issued by SecDef
  - Special rules for visits by President, Vice-President, Speaker of House in election years
- Anti-Lobbying Act
  - Appropriated funds may not be used to influence members of Congress to oppose/favor legislation

Common Pitfalls

- Pay attention in election years
- Find out effect of civil office on military position before running for office
- ANG member holds civil office and is subsequently called to active duty
  - Retire, discharge, release
  - UCMJ applies

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS / CONFUSION?